

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

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R 210830Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6964

AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0308

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, FR, MA

SUBJECT: REPORTED FRENCH ROLE IN RECENT MALAGASY REBELLION

DEPT PASS DIA

CINCLANT AND CINCUSNAVEUR FOR POLADS

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOMR CONVINCED CERTAIN FRENCH HAD ROLE
IN RECENT REBELLION, AND HAS AT LEAST CIRCUMSTANTIAL
EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS CONVICTION. FRENCH-MALAGASY
RELATIONS THEREFORE LIKELY BE STRAINED UNLESS FRENCH GOVT
MAKES GESTURE, SUCH AS AID, TOWARD MILITARY DIRECTORY.
END SUMMARY.

1. GOMR APPEARS CONVINCED THAT CERTAIN FRENCH HAD
ROLE IN RECENT REBELLION IN MADAGASCAR. AS RELATED TO
ME BY FONOFF SOURCE, MALAGASY AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THERE
ARE TWO FRENCH CAMPS VIS-A-VIS GOMR: (A) FRENCH
GOVERNMENT IN PARIS, WHICH IS FRIENDLY AND (B) CERTAIN
FRENCH IN MADAGASCAR, WHO ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED. I
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COMMENT (WITH MANY LOCAL FRENCH BUSINESSMEN IN MIND)
THAT I ASSUMED LATTER GROUP WAS OUTSIDE FRENCH EMBASSY,

BUT FONOFF OFFICIAL STATED SOME WITHIN EMBASSY FALL INTO THAT GROUP AS WELL.

2. HE THEN ASSERTED THAT SOCIALIST PARTY SECRETARY RESAMPA WAS OBSERVED COMING OUT OF FRENCH EMBASSY ON FEB 13 AND ENTER SOCIALIST PARTY BUILDING NEXT DOOR, SHORTLY BEFORE FIRE FIGHT DEVELOPED BETWEEN REBEL ARMED POLICE ELEMENTS THEREIN AND GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES. SAME SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT CERTAIN REBEL ELEMENTS ALSO TOOK TEMPORARY REFUGE IN AN ANNEX OF FRENCH EMBASSY.

3. FROM OTHER SOURCES WE KNOW THAT FRENCH BUSINESSMEN FROM COMPAGNIE MARSEILLAISE WHO WERE JAILED IN JANUARY AND LEFT PRISON WITH ALL OTHER PRISONERS DURING FIGHTING LAST WEEK HAVE ALL BEEN PLACED BACK IN CUSTODY (IN CONTRAST, FOR EXAMPLE, TO STATUS OF AMERICAN PRISONER REPPAS WHO REMAINS AT EMBASSY AND REPORTS DAILY TO POLICE STATION). IN VIEW RATSIMANDRAVA'S WIDELY KNOWN INVESTIGATION OF COMPAGNIE MARSEILLAISE, DETAILED INQUIRY IS PRESUMABLY UNDER WAY TO SEE WHETHER THERE ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THIS COMPANY AND HIS ASSASSINATION.

4. CURIOUSLY, RETIRED FRENCH BUSINESSMEN OFFERED FEB 8, BEFORE GROUP ABOUT 10 PEOPLE IN MAJUNGA (INCLUDING OUR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER), PLACE BET THAT RATSIMANDRAVA WOULD NO LONGER BE HEAD OF STATE ONE WEEK LATER. SUCH ACTIONS CAN ONLY OF COURSE FUEL MALAGASY SUSPICIONS IF THEY COME TO GOMR'S ATTENTION.

5. WE KNOW THAT FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICIALS (INCLUDING FORMER AMBASSADOR DELAUNEY, WHO LEFT IN NOV 1974) HAVE BEEN SEEING RESAMPA FROM TIME TO TIME OVER RECENT MONTHS, AND GOMR PROBABLY AWARE OF THIS ALSO. WE ARE CONVINCED (AS IS GOMR) THAT THERE WAS COLLUSION BETWEEN SOCIALIST PARTY AND REBELS, AT LEAST IN DEMANDS MADE BY REBELS ON GOMR, BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO SPECIFIC EVIDENCE THAT

SOCIALIST PARTY CONNIVED IN RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION.

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6. IN VIEW AT LEAST CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE CONNECTING CERTAIN FRENCH WITH RECENT REBELLION, GOMR-FRENCH RELATIONS LIKELY BE STRAINED UNLESS FRENCH GOVERNMENT MAKES SOME GESTURE, SUCH AS AID OFFER, TOWARD MILITARY DIRECTORY. SINCE GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO, DIRECTORY CHAIRMAN, IS BASICALLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARD FRANCE AS TOWARD WEST IN GENERAL, SUCH GESTURE SHOULD NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR FRENCH GOVERNMENT, AND WOULD SERVE FRENCH (AND OUR) INTERESTS OVER LONGER RUN.

7. IT ALSO AT LEAST IN PART GOMR CONCERN WITH FRENCH
INTERVENTION IN PRESENT SITUATION THAT HAS LED TO
SEVERING OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR ALL EMBASSIES HERE.
WE EXPECT, HOWEVER, THIS HAS CAUSED PROBLEMS FOR ALL
BUT FRENCH, WHO PROBABLY HAVE RADIO CAPABILITIES.
MENDENHALL

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